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Earthquakes rumble region
Beirutis inspect damage from an earthquake yesterday that could be felt in Lebanon, Israel and Syria. Story, Page 12. (Reuters)

Ross to press Arafat on terror

By MICHAL YUDELMAN and HILLEL KUTTNER
US special Mideast envoy Dennis Ross is arriving today on an urgent mission to try to prevail on Israel and the Palestinians to exercise maximal restraint and avert the eruption of violence on Sunday's Land Day.



Dennis Ross. (AP)

Police prepare for Land Day protests, Page 2

President Bill Clinton said he had dispatched Ross to the region, "because I'm concerned about the peace process. We have been talking among ourselves here intensely over the last several days about whether there are some ideas we ought to advance with the Israelis and the Palestinians, and particularly what we can do to minimize the violence and to get the negotiations back going."
Ross, who this morning will be meeting Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat in Rabat,

effort to control the situation and act with maximum restraint on Land Day. He spoke of "lowering the rhetoric," decreasing the tension, and finding ways to reestablish the partnership.
Ross will make it clear to Arafat that he must take "demonstrable and observable" steps against terrorism, and "reverse the perceived signal for violence. Nothing will be achieved unless the PA takes back that green light," the official said.
He stressed that terrorism is totally unacceptable and cannot be a factor in the negotiations. The US has told Arafat that it is disappointed that, at a time of such stress, he is traveling elsewhere, when he should be here, he added.
He said he expects Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to discuss his proposal to go straight to permanent settlement talks with Ross, while the Palestinians will raise future redeployment.
Only after Ross returns to Washington and briefs Clinton, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, and other senior officials

Riots continue in territories

By JON IMMANUEL
Palestinian students tried to storm Israeli checkpoints outside Ramallah yesterday, following more violence in Bethlehem and Hebron, where almost daily protests have erupted near IDF checkpoints since last Friday.
The riot developed quickly and lasted for almost two hours. Palestinian sources reported 22 people were injured, mostly by rubber bullets and tear gas.
In Bethlehem, the Palestinian Police quickly dispersed rioters who had burned an Israeli and an American flag. A protester shouting through a bullhorn said, "We will continue the struggle to stop the Judaizing of Jerusalem."
Preventive Security Chief Jibril Rajoub was on hand in Bethlehem, calling on police to separate the

protesters and declaring he was ready and able to stop violence. However, in an interview with the daily *Ayyam* newspaper, Rajoub said, "Security cannot be separated from politics, despite the Palestinian Authority's efforts."
General security chief Amin Hindi also said, in an interview in *Hayar al-Jadida*, that "security is influenced by politics" and that "the Netanyahu government is responsible for the situation."
The anti-American feeling in street protests was echoed in the Palestinian Legislative Council yesterday. Speaker after speaker accused the US of protecting

Israel against the condemnation of the world by its vetoes in the UN Security Council and its lone support of Israel in the General Assembly.
Council speaker Ahmed Qurie, the chief Oslo negotiator, said the problem is not limited to Har Homa alone.
"We want an American guarantee that settlements should be stopped. Everybody says there is no way to go to an agreement if settlements continue," Qurie said.
Qurie blamed Netanyahu for "creating the problem by his statements, which were a shot fired at the peace process, that the Oslo agreement allows him to continue settlements. This is a big lie."
The Fatah Higher Council, which supports the PA, but has the ear of the street and includes several members of the

Legislative Council, voted this week to continue demonstrations in coordination with Hamas supporters, culminating on Sunday, Land Day.
Meanwhile in Qatar, Faisal Husseini, the top PLO official in Jerusalem, said yesterday that Arab states should sever links with Israel to force it to move forward on the peace process with the Palestinians.
"Israel must understand all its relations with the Arab and outside world are directly connected to the peace process and the situation in Jerusalem," Husseini told Reuters.
Margot Dudkevitch adds:
Last night a Japanese tourist was wounded when stones were thrown at a tourist bus near El-Jib outside Ramallah. A firebomb was thrown at an IDF jeep in the Ramallah area; there were no injuries or damage.

PM: No talks until PA combats terror

By STEVE RODAN and ARIEH O'SULLIVAN
Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, saying he will oppose a Palestinian state in final-status negotiations, warned Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat last night that he must fight Islamic terrorism before Israel agrees to resume negotiations with the PA.
"Anyone who wants to be accorded respect and legitimacy must fight terrorism," said Netanyahu, addressing the new International Policy Institute for Counterterrorism in Herzliya. "The Palestinians must fight against terrorism in order to return to the negotiating table."
On another issue, Netanyahu expressed concern over Iran's rearmament effort, saying, "We are convinced that Iran is developing missiles to reach Israel, then Europe, and then the US. If they achieve this, everybody's in danger."
Top IDF commanders told Defense Minister

Yitzhak Mordechai that the PA has so far not taken any steps to curb terror, making this assessment during a three-hour meeting last night on the security situation and preparations leading up to Land Day on Sunday.
Mordechai told the forum that the high alert and expanded deployment of all security forces would continue and that the tight closure on Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip would not be lifted for now.
Mordechai ordered all IDF personnel and security officials to demand in all their meetings with PA officials that they crack down hard on terror if they want progress in the peace process.
The IDF, meanwhile, reportedly instructed residents of Jewish settlements in Judea and Samaria not to allow Palestinian laborers into their settlements from Friday until Monday, out of fear of attacks prior to Land Day. The IDF Spokesman, however, would not comment on the report.

Ethiopian leaders lash IDF after third suicide in month

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN and Itan
"Every morning when I get to the base, six soldiers are waiting for me who clap their hands and yell: 'The kushi [black man] is here,'" Alene Tamene, 22, an Ethiopian immigrant from Ashkelon serving in the army, told his niece on Sunday, a day before he committed suicide.
Tamene was the second Ethiopian-born soldier to commit suicide within the past 10 days, and the third in the past month. He was to complete his service in less than three months.
Molla Belay took his own life on March 14, after an army psychiatrist dismissed his pleas to be released because he felt "under pressure," following an incident in which Belay was publicly harangued by his superiors. Soldier Avraham Gideon of Beersheba committed suicide about a month ago.
When Tamene complained to his commander about the name-calling, he was told: "What's the matter, don't you know you're a kushi? What are you complaining

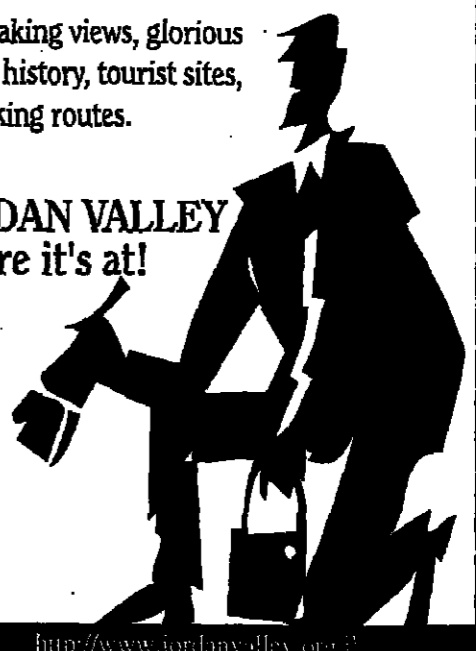
about?" according to Shlomo Mula, secretary of the United Ethiopian Jewish Organization.
After he gave his niece a gift for her birthday last Sunday, she asked Tamene what his army service was like.
"He told her: 'I'm having trouble in the army,'" Mula said yesterday. Mula said Tamene told her of his daily denigration by his comrades and his commander's refusal to intervene. "Then he told her: 'I'm going to kill the commander and commit suicide,'" Mula said. The IDF is still investigating the incident.
"This is terrible. I can't believe this could happen. Every week we go to funerals," Mula said, of the recent series of suicides among Ethiopian soldiers. He noted that Ethiopian immigrants make up just 0.4% of IDF soldiers, but comprise 10% of suicides inside the IDF.
Mula explained that in Belay's case, the soldier had worked as a cook, and was asked to prepare three crates of sandwiches for soldiers from the base. When he saw that he lacked enough kitchen staff, he enlisted the help of some other soldiers. Then, the base doctor, who had stopped in to do a midnight sanitation check in the kitchen, yelled at him to throw out the sandwiches, since using soldiers to "prepare them violated

sanitation codes."
Belay then got some other kitchen workers and worked through the early morning hours to get the sandwiches ready in time.
Later he complained of the shakes, and demanded some time off the base, but a psychiatrist he was sent to in Beersheba ruled he "was faking," according to Mula.
"I don't understand how this psychiatrist made this determination after a half hour with him," Mula, himself a social worker and a reserve lieutenant.
Mula also denied that Belay, who lived at the Hafetz Haim caravan site, committed suicide because of economic or social problems, or a general inability to acclimate to army life. "He has a brother in a hesder yeshiva right now," Mula said, "and is one of eight brothers, four of whom were in the army. This wasn't a family that was unfamiliar with the army."
Mula added that what needs to be examined is just how Belay was spoken to by the doctor.
"The army isn't insensitive," Mula said, "but the problem is with the lower-level commanders." Mula said he recommended that the army ban the use of the word *kushi* by anyone doing army service.

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NEWS

in brief

Federman acquitted on weapons charge

Former Kach spokesman Noam Federman was acquitted yesterday by Jerusalem Magistrate's Court of charges of endangering human life by carrying a knife...



Noam Federman (Niran Shorer)

Hefetz Bar-On investigation complete

The Bar-On investigation has been completed, but the police has not yet made a recommendation on indictments...

Terrorist's trial postponed

The trial of Hamas terrorist Hassan Salameh on charges he planned last year's No. 18 bus and Ashkelon junction bombings was postponed yesterday until April 7...

Ivry panel watches simulated chopper crash

The Ivry Commission of Inquiry into the February 4 helicopter crash which killed 73 servicemen yesterday examined a simulated collision of the two CH-53 choppers produced by a NASA lab in California...

Gov't won't petition court over Dotan's release

The state will not petition the High Court of Justice over a military parole board's decision to release embezzler Rami Dotan...

Mordechai postpones US trip

Due to the tense security situation, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai has postponed and shortened his long-scheduled trip to the US...

Three men sentenced for domestic violence

A Tel Aviv man was sentenced to six months' suspended by Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court yesterday, after he pleaded guilty to severely beating his wife and battering her head against a wall...

Health Ministry warns against salmon product

The Health Ministry yesterday warned the public not to eat a product called "smoked salmon filet medallion," produced by the Veroni company in Migdal Ha'emek...

NIS 200m. allocated for senior immigrants

The government plans to allocate NIS 200 million to find housing solutions for elderly immigrants in 1997, the Knesset Immigration and Absorption Committee was told yesterday...

Weaker high schoolers may increase workload

High school pupils currently taking a relatively light course load will be given an opportunity to take on a more challenging workload and earn additional matriculation points...

No winner in NIS 12m. Lotto draw

No one succeeded in guessing all the numbers in Tuesday's Lotto drawing for a NIS 12 million prize, Mifal Hapayis announced yesterday...

Israeli Arabs won't delay Land Day

Rallies planned in Negev, Galilee, triangle and Jaffa

By DAVID RUDGE

Israeli Arab leaders yesterday rejected a call to postpone activities planned for Land Day on Sunday, because of the tense situation...

We decide on the matter and not Adi Eldar. Leaflets have been distributed throughout the Arab community calling on the public to take part in the general strike declared by the Arab leadership on Land Day...

against what participants described as the government's "settlement policies" and the ongoing expropriation of Arab-owned land. Organizers plan to plant olive tree saplings on land near Umm al-Fahm and in the Negev...

Inflammatory statements have been made which recall the 1960s and 1970s, which are warning and frightening the public that we are planning riots, which is not the case...

Police brace for potential riots

By RAINE MARCUS and LIAT COLLINS

Police brass will convene this evening to discuss security arrangements for this Sunday's Land Day, Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani said yesterday...

heads to help ensure that events run smoothly. Tel Aviv police chief Cmdr. Shlomo Aharonishky said city police would be on high alert in Jaffa on Sunday...



Clashes continue Palestinian youths hurl and sling rocks at IDF soldiers stationed near Rachel's Tomb yesterday, as clashes over construction at Har Homa continued.

Worshippers return to Joseph's Tomb

By MARGOT DUDKOVICH

The IDF opened Joseph's Tomb to worshippers yesterday morning, after OC Judea and Samaria Maj.-Gen. Gabi Ophir met with Palestinian Police commanders from Nablus late Tuesday night...

Arafat accuses US of failing to support him

DHAKA, Bangladesh (AP) - Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat complained in an interview published yesterday that the US administration is not supporting him fully...

and persuaded him to return to the Middle East to meet her envoy, Dennis Ross, to try to end the impasse in Palestinian-Israeli negotiations...

process, he urged Israel to honor its peace accord with the Palestinians. "Israel must realize that there can be no durable peace in the Middle East unless the agreement reached between us is implemented fully..."

PA head pulls pistol at Sri Lankan banquet

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka (AP) - Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat surprised his hosts at a state banquet by pulling out his pistol after a guest wondered if he still walks around armed...

Porush: No room in capital

By LIAT COLLINS

Deputy Housing Minister Meir Porush (United Torah Judaism) said yesterday there is almost no land left in Jerusalem on which to build...

prepared for building more homes for the city's Arab residents, despite the government's intentions. He noted, however, that the present government had invested NIS 9 million in developing the infrastructure in the eastern part of the city...

ARRIVALS

The Anti-Defamation League's National Leadership Mission to Israel led by David H. Strasser, National Chairman and Abraham H. Foxman, National Director.

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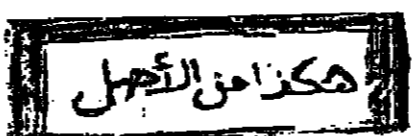
Advertisement for 'GEORGE WASHINGTON AT A SEDER?' featuring a book by Moshe Kohn, published by Gefen.

CORRECTION The photo caption on Page 4 of yesterday's paper mistakenly identified Mickey and Shani Winter, the husband and baby daughter of Tel Aviv bomb victim Anat Rosen-Winter. We regret the error.

Advertisement for BEN NATHAN, DAVID household goods warehouse sale.

Advertisement for ILANOT Discount's Mutual Funds Management Co. Ltd.

Advertisement for BEZEQ The Israel Telecommunications Corp. Ltd. tender for FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR AUTOMATIC PROVISION OF GASOLINE AND DIESEL FUEL.





Workers protest factory closure
Histadrut chairman Amr Peretz stands opposite the Knesset yesterday with Delta textile workers from Shfaram. The women's placards read "Industrialize the Arab villages" and "Every government should provide jobs for its citizens." (Hanan Harari)

Court: Send child to father in Britain

By BATSHEVA TSUR

In a precedent-setting decision, the Supreme Court ruled yesterday that a young Israeli mother who had left her non-Jewish husband in England must return their small child to the UK.

Justices Mishael Cheshin, Yitzhak Zamir, and Dorit Beinisch based their ruling on the Hague Convention governing the abduction of children. Quoting the convention, they said they had no choice but to "order the return of the child forthwith" to England.

The father, a British citizen, had appealed to the court to order the return of the child to allow a British court to decide on custody, following a previous decision by the Nazareth District Court to grant custody to the mother.

Yesterday's ruling was contrary to the opinion of psychologists, who had expressed the opinion that the child should continue to

grow up with her mother in her kibbutz. In an expert opinion, the psychologists said that "the child's return to England would expose her to severe psychological damage and would put her in an intolerable situation."

The mother, identified only as Dafna from Kibbutz Baram, met her husband Adam when he came to Baram as a volunteer in January 1993. Shortly afterward, Adam left the kibbutz and went to live in Eilat, where Dafna, then 17, later joined him. When they decided to marry, they left for Sussex in England and were married by a civil registrar. They had a daughter, Kara, and lived with different relatives of Adam's.

According to Dafna, Adam turned out to be a "good-for-nothing" who did not want to work, used drugs, and lived off his mother's savings and social security. She told the court that he often used physical violence against her and

would leave her locked up at home while he went out at night.

During her pregnancy and when she gave birth, Dafna had wanted her mother to join her in England, but Adam threatened her and refused, she told the court. Finally, when she could no longer stand the situation, her mother arrived secretly and they left with the baby.

Dafna reacted to the ruling with shock.

"I feel like this is just doing a favor to another country. I am an Israeli citizen, a Jew, and I and my daughter are being extradited to a strange country where I have nothing, no means to exist," Dafna told Israel Radio. "I do not have British citizenship or a job and am dependent on Adam's whims. This is a scandal... I was kept a virtual prisoner there."

She said she would not return to England. "I will fight the ruling and I'll get everyone who can to help me," she said.

Domestic violence hot line faces government cuts

By ESTHER HECHT

Just a month after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai declared their support for battered women, a drastic cut in government funding is about to snuff a crucial lifeline for the victims.

The Anti-Violence Hot Line, which serves 1,200 women a year in Haifa and the North, said yesterday it had just learned the ministry is reducing its annual support from NIS 500,000 to just NIS 66,000.

"It means we'll have to close down," said Ronit Edelding, who heads the hot line's corps of volunteers.

According to Edelding, the ministry justified the cut by saying it wants to reassess all the organizations that deal with domestic violence. Meanwhile, however, the number of women seeking help keeps growing, as the hot line's educational efforts encourage them to break their silence, she said.

The hot line -- a joint project of the ministry, Haifa Municipality, and several other bodies -- operates 12 hours a day in Hebrew, Arabic, Russian, Amharic, and English. It has trained and pays the salaries of three social workers who help women through the city's welfare offices. Its members accompany women to the police, the courts, and the rabbinical courts.

Meir Hovav, the ministry's director of youth and adult correctional services, under whose jurisdiction the hot line falls, insisted the ministry never gave the hot line any money before this year. The money the ministry transferred to the Haifa Municipality was earmarked for the battered women's shelter.

"Untrue," responded Ilana Chernobroda, adviser on the status of women to Haifa Mayor Anram Mitzna. "Last year the ministry transferred the money through the city specifically for the hot line."

She said she had turned to MK Yael Dayan (Labor) to help restore the ministry's support.

E. Europe survivors deserve big part of Swiss fund - US

By MARILYN HENRY

NEW YORK -- Eastern European survivors, long the forgotten victims of Nazism, should get a "significant amount" of the Swiss Holocaust humanitarian fund, the leading US restitution official said.

The United States also believes Germany should offer compensation to these survivors, Undersecretary of Commerce Stuart Eizenstat said Tuesday night in New York.

"The [Clinton] administration believes that a significant amount" of the so-called private Swiss fund should be used to aid survivors in Central and Eastern Europe, Eizenstat said at a meeting of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations. The Swiss fund, now valued at

285 million Swiss francs, was established earlier this month to compensate "needy" Holocaust survivors.

The criteria for need have yet to be established, but relief and reparations officials say that the survivors of Eastern Europe are in the worst straits. They are the victims of what Eizenstat called the "twin tragedy" of having lived under Nazism and communism.

They did not qualify for German reparations programs during the Cold War. The Germans feared "the communist governments would siphon off that money and it would never get to survivors," he said.

"That was completely understandable, but now we have a situation in which those countries are all viable democracies, and yet there is still no payment," Eizenstat said.

IN MARKING THE 25TH YAHRZEIT FOR DR. YAACOV HERZOG THE FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES THE YAACOV HERZOG SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS CEREMONY FOR RESEARCH IN LAW, JEWISH STUDIES, TALMUD AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE PRESENCE OF: H.E. EZER WEIZMANN, PRESIDENT OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL. MR. SHIMON PERES, M.K. MR. EHUD OLMBERT, MAYOR OF JERUSALEM UNDER THE AUSPICES OF: THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM. TEL-AVIV UNIVERSITY BAR-ILAN UNIVERSITY ARIEL - UNITED ISRAEL INSTITUTES ON MONDAY, MARCH 31 ST., 1997 AT 4:00 P.M. AT THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES 43 JABOTINSKY ST. JERUSALEM R.S.V.P TEL. 02-5882819, 02-5882820

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Bombings rock northern England

By SUE LEEMAN

LONDON (AP) — Twin explosions tore up rail track and damaged important signaling equipment in the northern English town of Wilmslow yesterday morning, hours after a telephone warning from a man claiming to represent the IRA.

Greater Manchester Police said there were no casualties but there was extensive damage and disruption to train service from Scotland to London and throughout northern England. Wilmslow, about 260 km northwest of London, is a major signaling center for trains on the main west coast line from Manchester to London.

Another warning was received about a possible device in the northern England town of Doncaster and the station area was evacuated, said Kevin Groves of Railtrack, which operates the line. Doncaster is 250 km north of London and about 95 km east of Wilmslow.

Late yesterday morning, police and bomb disposal experts were still searching the area around both stations.

The explosions came only a day after Scotland Yard Police Commissioner Sir Paul Condon warned of the possibility of IRA attacks timed to coincide with Britain's general election on May 1. Prime Minister John Major

called the explosions "a two-fingered insult to democracy at the start of the general election campaign."

He said he hoped the IRA and its allied Sinn Fein Party were not going to conduct their election campaign at the ballot box in Northern Ireland and with bombs in mainland Britain.

Opposition leader Tony Blair, whose Labor Party is leading in opinion polls, said if the IRA was responsible, it should realize that no British government will be intimidated by "such outrages."

He also warned that the IRA's chances of joining the democratic process "diminished with every bomb and bullet." Irish Foreign Minister Dick Spring said IRA bombs exacerbate the difficulties in trying to bring peace to Northern Ireland.

"If these people think they're going to be nearer to a solution by bombs or the threat of bombs, they're living in cloud cuckoo land, a totally illusory world," he told Sky television.

The day after the 1992 election, the IRA planted two bombs in London. One outside the historic Baltic Exchange building killed three people, injured 91 and caused more than \$950 million in damage. The other at Staples Corner in north London caused extensive damage.

In 1993, two young boys were

killed by an IRA bomb in the center of Warrington, near Wilmslow.

Cheshire police said there were two calls from a man using a recognized Irish Republican Army code word warning of bombs. The first call at 5:30 a.m. was made to an elderly woman in Wilmslow who called police warning of a device at the local police station.

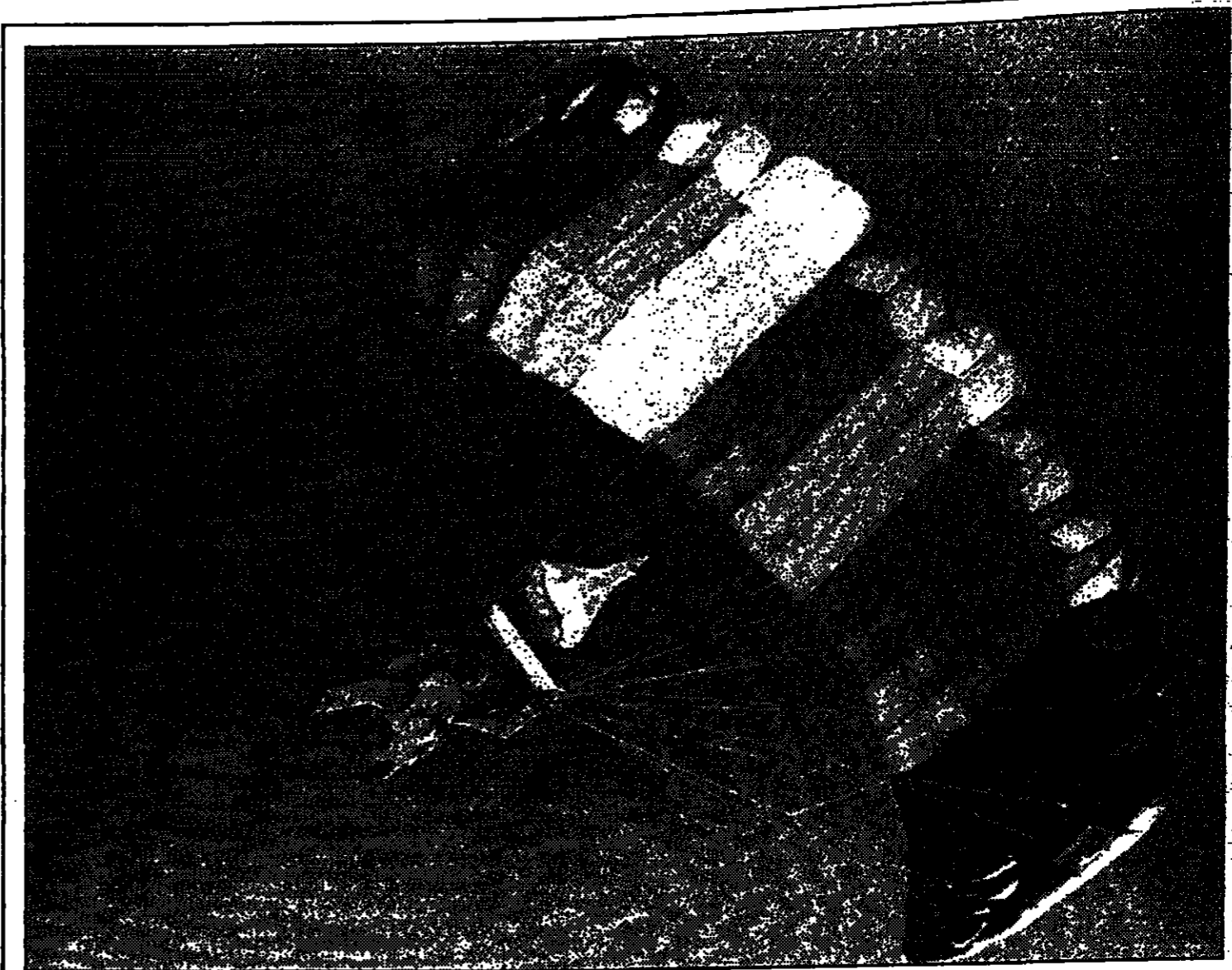
The second was made to a hospital in the Greater Manchester area, warning of a device at the railway station.

The second warning probably averted serious casualties since more than 100 people had been evacuated from an area around the police station to a leisure center across from the police station. They were then moved to a supermarket 1.6 km away.

At 6:30 a.m., an explosion was heard at a signaling box on the railway line, about 250 meters from Wilmslow station, Greater Manchester Police Inspector Leslie Smith said.

"The area was cordoned off, and as officers were doing this, there was a second loud explosion just after 7 a.m. and that was near to the first one," he said.

Evan Morris of the Cheshire fire service said fire fighters helping police at the scene of the first blast "were extremely close to the second device that went off on the track." Police estimated the devices were about 50 meters apart.



Bush is back
Former US president George Bush, 72, makes a parachute jump over the US Army Proving Ground in Yuma, Arizona. (Reuters)

Papua New Guinea premier resigns

PORT MORESBY (AP) — Prime Minister Julius Chan of Papua New Guinea resigned yesterday after an army mutiny, riots and nine days of uproar over a plan to use foreign mercenaries to crush a 9-year-old rebellion.

The defense and finance ministers also agreed to resign while an interim government runs the country until national elections in June.

Chan said he was acting in the interest of the country to defuse an "explosive" situation after protesters and mutinous soldiers blockaded Parliament House, refusing to let lawmakers out.

"I think I have taken the right course ... to preserve peace, to preserve order. This is the right thing to do," Chan told Parliament.

Some 2,000 protesters outside cheered loudly at the news, and both sides of the house gave him an ovation at the end of his address. The protesters let lawmakers leave Parliament after Chan's resignation.

Chan said he would convene the Cabinet within 24 hours to appoint an acting prime minister. He did not indicate who might replace him.

The changes, he said, will ensure public confidence in a government-ordered judicial inquiry into the country's mercenary contract with Sandline International, a British mercenary firm.

Chan said the pressures the mutinous army had put his government under for nine days were "against the principle of a stable, democracy," which is why he resisted demands for his resignation this long.

But Chan defended the restraint shown by the army. Throughout the crisis they stayed in their barracks, except for several dozen who joined Tuesday's protests at Parliament and intimidated lawmakers.

"They put pressure on, but they said they would accept the vote of the Parliament," Chan said of the troops.

Gore holds talks with Chinese leaders

BEIJING (AP) — US Vice President Al Gore said yesterday that two days of talks with China's leaders convinced him Beijing is prepared to do more to open its markets to US goods and is more receptive to candid discussions about human rights.

After a meeting with President Jiang Zemin, Gore said he had raised specific cases in which the United States objected to China's handling of dissidents and political prisoners.

Gore said there were some "strong disagreements" on this subject during his talks here, but that overall "the response was a more receptive response than I have had in previous discussions on this subject."

Gore said he would not offer details of the cases he raised because it was his belief "our prospects for success are

enhanced" by keeping discussions private.

But he said he "did not pull any punches" during talks on human rights and said "we are finding ways to communicate more effectively with China's leaders on this topic." He did not cite any specific promises from his hosts.

Prominent dissidents complained ahead of Gore's arrival that police had increased surveillance of their activities.

The US vice president said he had told Jiang and Premier Li Peng that allegations China illegally funneled money into US elections last year were being investigated by federal law enforcement authorities. "They vigorously denied the allegations," Gore said, but added those allegations alone were no reason to slow the recent warming of relations between the two countries.

South African killers face sentence today

DURBAN (AP) — Twelve men convicted on 18 murder charges in the 1995 Christmas Day massacre in KwaZulu-Natal province will be sentenced today.

A 15-year-old youth also convicted in the murders will be sentenced at a later date, Judge Hilary Squires said yesterday.

Squires said he would need more time to decide on an appropriate sentence for the youth.

The 13 defendants were convicted by Squires of taking part in an attack by an estimated 2,000 armed Inkatha Freedom Party supporters on the rural village of Shobashobane, inhabited by rival African National Congress supporters.

Lawyers for the defendants argued for lenient sentences at a mitigation hearing yesterday, saying the Inkatha supporters were provoked by road blockades, stonings and other acts by the ANC supporters.

State Prosecutor Sandish Sankar told the court he accepted there had been acts of provocation, but said "other options" were available to the Inkatha supporters.

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FLAIR

Fuss-free shopping at department stores

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

A department store by definition caters to a broad clientele, and though its prices may not always be cheaper than those in your local shopping center, it does offer greater variety, with easier access to the merchandise.

One never feels uncomfortable inspecting clothes in a department store.

The over-zealous shop assistant hovering at one's shoulder to prevent possible theft while simultaneously pushing sales.

One can try something on without being bulldozed into believing that a garment which is anything but flattering is just perfect for one's needs.

And changing cubicles in department stores are plentiful and private. One doesn't have to be surreptitious about checking prices. Everyone else is doing the same.

Hamashbir Lazarchan, with 22 branches throughout the country, prides itself on giving value for money in the clothing stakes, but not all Hamashbir clothing departments carry exactly the same stock, and prices on certain items may vary from store to store.

It can be quite frustrating not to find in one's local branch something that one has seen in one of the company's larger stores elsewhere.

The best selection is undoubtedly in the company's newly renovated Dizengoff Center outlet where options run the gamut from ultra-casual to ultra-formal, petite to large, and budget-priced to expensive.

But beware. What one sees in Dizengoff Center one does not always see closer to home.

An "any occasion" garment is spring/summer fashions for him as well as her, Hamashbir demonstrated that the well-dressed man will have at least one vest and one boxy, collarless jacket in his possession.

If he's not too conservative, he'll also add a pair of plaid pants or Bermudas to what is already hanging in his closet.

Plaids feature strongly in women's fashions as well, as do stripes, fruit motifs, positive/negative graphics and all-over florals.

Fabrics tend to be very light and often sheer, with skirt lengths moving from ankle to mid-thigh, and widths expanding from pencil slim to a comfortable swath.

To anyone over the age of 30, the styles are very défilé - but then again repetition has characterized the fashions of the '90s, providing only tiny nuances to distinguish them from those of a previous era.

While minimalism seems to be giving way to romance on overseas runways, the trend has not yet made an impact on Hamashbir, where plain and simple is the dominant theme.

Several companies which supply Hamashbir have included the slim, but not tight-fitting,



Onyx plaid pants and cropped tee-shirt from Hamashbir.

sleeveless dress. An "any occasion" garment, it can be teamed with matching and contrasting jackets and jazzed up with jewelry and colored scarves.

The joy of having so many choices of an almost identical style is that cut and size vary

from manufacturer to manufacturer, and one brand's size 38 may be another brand's size 40. Similarly, skirt lengths may vary from one manufacturer to another, and that difference in length is often the deciding factor in whether or not you'll buy the garment.

By LORA SCHOCHAT

Sun, sea, clean air, delicious food and gorgeous views. There are a lot of reasons to visit Greece, but for Israelis, there is an added bonus: it's like a home away from home. The flight is only an hour and 40 minutes and the climate is similar to here. Now, in the spring, the air is crisp and cool in Athens, while on the Aegean islands visitors can count on wearing T-shirts and slacks.

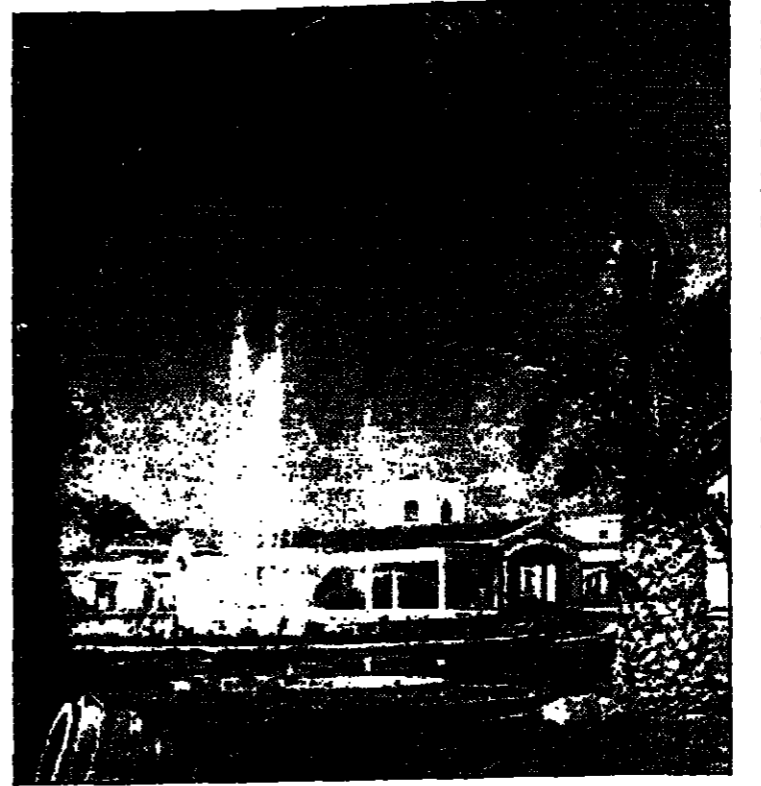
Greeks and Israelis share a similar warmth and sense of hospitality, as well as hutzpa. Hagglng is de rigeur in Athens's Plaka flea market, which offers high-end crafts as well as touristy knickknacks, and at the marketplaces in Thessaloniki. The Mediterranean flavor of traditional Greek dishes, usually served with lemon or olive oil, strongly resemble our local tastes.

Piraeus, Athens's main port, is also the starting point of an all-day cruise on the tourist boat Herms, which left from the port at 9 a.m. for a breathtaking tour of three beautiful islands: Aegina, Poros and Hydrous. These jewels of the Aegean Sea offer the traveler a true break from "real life" with their clean, sweet air and azure waters.

Aegina is the largest island of the three, and boasts ancient ruins, a picturesque monastery and loads of pistachio trees. The island also has a small but beautiful fish market, which has many non-touristy taverns and eateries spread throughout it. Fresh octopuses roasting on an open fire were a common sight.

Poros and Hydrous are smaller islands, each with quaint shops and cafes. Hydrous's attractions are particularly charming: There are no motor vehicles on the island, only donkeys. Visitors can take a 20-minute donkey ride from the island's edge into its lush green hills studded with white and blue houses to explore a splendor strikingly dif-

Greek delights



The Hyatt Regency Casino Thessaloniki is Europe's largest and most luxurious.

ferent from the serene beauty of the sea. There is also a castle and cannons from the 1700s on the seafloor. These islands are also a fisherman's paradise; local fishermen will take you out on their boats for a few hours for a small fee.

If the islands offer tranquil beauty, the city of Thessaloniki, known for its deep Jewish history, offers both beauty and excitement. Elected the Cultural Capital of Europe for 1997, Thessaloniki will be home to cultural events galore through mid-April, from an exhibit of Caravaggio's paintings to a musical program about the Balkans. Known as the "Capital of Macedonia," the city boasts ruins from the Byzantine peri-

od (a castle and also the White Tower, which is home to one of the largest Byzantine icon collections anywhere) as well as an extensive exhibit at the Archeological Museum, which houses artifacts from ancient northern Greece, including the bones of Philip II, who was the father of Alexander the Great, and some exquisitely detailed gold myrtle wreaths, worn by Philip and his wives. As for nightlife, one of the most exciting places to be is at the Hyatt Regency Casino, Thessaloniki. The largest and most luxurious casino in the whole of Europe, the Hyatt Regency is a gambler's paradise with over 4,000 square meters of

American and European games such as roulette, stud poker and blackjack. It also features first-class restaurants, which offer traditional Greek, Asian and Italian delights. One of the most enticing dishes sampled was barbecued swordfish with horseradish-whipped potatoes and mango chutney. The Hyatt is planning on extending the casino into a full-fledged hotel.

One of the best denise fish this writer has ever tasted was served at Prassina Trehantria, in Piraeus. The fish was smoked to perfection with a blend of spices and lemon, the flavors of which seeped into the skin. The appetizer consisted of deep-fried calamari and sardines, as well as fried shrimps which were extremely tender and well-prepared. These appetizers were typical of most of our meals. Chilled fresh fruit was the perfect dessert to match a light, yet satisfying, meal.

For those who wish to experience the color, vibrancy and taste of Greece on their home turf, the Hyatt Regency Jerusalem is kicking off a two-week Greek Festival, beginning next Monday and continuing through April 10. Valentino's Restaurant is hosting two chefs from Thessaloniki who will prepare authentic delicacies from the Aegean islands, countryside villages and Athens. A guest troupe of Greek musicians and dancers will provide entertainment and a display of traditional costume will be featured in the atrium lobby of the hotel. The above events are sponsored by the Greek national Tourist Organization, Olympic Airways, TAT Travel and Tours and Hyatt Thessaloniki Casino.

For reservations for the festival, call (02) 533-1222. The writer was a guest of the Greek National Tourist Organization, Olympic Airways, TAT Travel and Tours, Hyatt Regency Casino Thessaloniki and Hyatt Regency in Jerusalem.

CAVEAT EMPTOR!

By RUTHIE BLUM

The month before Pessah is a time when the accident-prone should be especially cautious. There is nothing quite like heavy-duty cleaning for increasing risk of injury. Moving furniture, shaking out carpets, climbing ladders to reach high cupboards, and hauling vacuum cleaners and pails to and fro are all tasks which have been known to lead to cuts, bruises, sprains, strains and breaks. (A neighbor of mine actually fell off her second-story balcony while beating a rug; miraculously, she was virtually unscathed.)

For those of you who have the misfortune to fall prey to physical mishap, however, you are covered by the National Insurance Institute (NII). While it is commonly known that work-related accidents are covered, you may not be aware that you can receive money if you fall off a ladder at home and break your arm, like one incapacitated friend who ended up having difficulty performing even the most minor tasks for several weeks.

According to the accident insurance law, an "accident" is defined as "a sudden incident in which a person receives bodily injury due to an external factor, and due to which he lost his ability to function." This law applies to all residents between the ages of 18 and 60 for a woman or 65 for a man.

The criteria for being considered an accident victim who has lost the ability to function are

- as follows: 1. If you are either a salaried employee or self-employed who, as a result of the accident, cannot do your job or any other suitable job. 2. If you are neither salaried nor self-employed but are hospitalized or house-bound as a result of the accident. 3. If you are a housewife who, as a result of the accident, are unable to perform household tasks. Who is eligible for this benefit? A resident of Israel who had an accident - here or abroad - is eligible for "accident money" for the time he or she is here and unable to function, if, during this time he or she was not working in any job. If you have an accident, you must be examined by a doctor within 72 hours of the accident. Failure to do so might mean a loss of your right to the benefit (unless it is subsequently proven that the symptoms of your particular accident only began to appear after the 72-hour period; in this case, you've got to be examined within two weeks of the accident). The NII pays this benefit for a maximum of 90 days. The amount paid per day is equivalent to that paid to victims of work-related accidents. 1. For salaried employees, it is 75 percent of your salary (for the quarter of a year prior to the accident), divided by 90. 2. For the self-employed, it is 75 percent of your earnings (according to which you have paid the NII in the quarter of a year prior to the accident), divided by 90. 3. For those who were neither salaried

employees nor self-employed at the time of the accident, it is 25 percent of the average wage determined on January 1 preceding the day of the accident, with an addition of the calculated rise in pension payments from January 1 until the date of the accident, divided by 30. (Anyone who - like me - is mathematically handicapped should not panic about not being able to understand how to calculate any of these sums, but rather should use this as a guideline, before phoning the NII to receive a personalized explanation.) When does all of this not apply? When you are already receiving money - for the same accident - from another source (provident fund, pension fund, sick days, etc.) or when you are hospitalized irrespective of the accident, and receiving paid care anyway, or if you are in the IDF or in jail. For further information - which undoubtedly you'll need when trying to decipher fine and not-so-fine print, contact the NII office nearest you. If you are unsure whom to contact about your specific inquiry, first call the public-information number: (03) 695-6348. As an addendum, I would like to point out that the NII also pays money to victims of terrorism. Brochures on this subject can be obtained from the offices of the NII. You are invited to offer personal stories of goods and services in this country. Write to: Ruthie Blum, POB 81, 91000 Jerusalem.

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Scandalous behavior

The country's leading insurance companies may, for now, get away with rejecting demands they dismiss the general managers recently indicted for creating a cartel in homeowners' and corporate insurance.

The type of behavior exhibited by the insurance companies might have been quietly overlooked 40 years ago. Those days are over. Israel's economy and society can no longer condone or afford to indulge monopolies and cartels.

The directors of Migdal Insurance voted on Tuesday to dismiss Shorer's ruling outright, expressing their full confidence in indicted Migdal general manager Uzi Levi, Migdal deputy manager Gideon Rosolio, and Hamagen deputy general manager Amichai Harari, claiming that this decision should be left in the hands of the Italian insurance giant Assicurazioni Generali, which will soon take control of Migdal's operations.

Other insurance companies, such as Clal, delayed making a decision on Shorer's demands, in a childish attempt to play for time. The crimes for which six insurance companies, 11 of their managers, and the Association of Insurance Companies were convicted in Jerusalem District Court two weeks ago are among the most serious in the sphere of economics.

The companies used their collective power to damage competition in the sector, worsen insurance conditions, and harm the trust that is essential for the building of economic relations. In

other countries, chief executive officers of companies can generally be trusted, because they know they will have to pay a price for the errors they commit. Here, on the other hand, persons in high positions in business, the military, and politics routinely seek any excuse they can find to avoid paying personally for their mistakes.

The insurance cartel scandal is no exception. The companies have claimed that the price-fixing was necessary given that prices are dictated by foreign underwriters. They say they have learned their lesson and will not repeat their actions, and that it is unfair to demand their resignation, because the plea bargain they agreed to did not include resignation.

Each of these claims is weak. Foreign underwriters are an important element in insurance around the world, and they certainly do not necessitate a cartel. They should be compared to wholesale prices, which do not exclude competition in the retail price paid by individual consumers. The claim that the insurance managers "have learned their lesson" should be greeted with healthy scepticism, especially given charges which have recently surfaced that a life-insurance cartel was effected even after the homeowners' insurance cartel was exposed.

As for the claim that the plea bargain did not include dismissal of managers, it should be remembered that, just as judges need not accept plea bargains agreed to by prosecutors, the public need not accept minor punishments either. The fines imposed on the companies, at a maximum of NIS 6 million, and those imposed on managers, of around NIS 300,000, might sound hefty at first. But if one considers that Generali paid \$330 million for its share of Migdal, and the high monthly salaries earned by the managers of insurance companies, these fines appear to be relatively minor.

There are indications that some Knesset members are considering drafting a law requiring the managers of companies to resign under such circumstances. It would be preferable not to have to resort to parliamentary action in such matters, but if there is no other choice, the Knesset will have to do its duty and protect the public's interest.

Slow boat to China

The powerless US vice-presidency remains the joy of stand-up comics in the United States, even after the passing from the scene of such cartoon characters as Spiro T. Agnew and Dan Quayle. Hence a more serious character, like Al Gore, has a doubly uphill task on an important mission like his current trip to China.

Gore's trip is deadly serious, but it is hard to see that it has achieved much beyond aiding slightly the psychological thaw in frosty bilateral relations. He is the most senior American official to visit China since the crushing of the student protests in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Two years ago Gore and Prime Minister Li Peng had an angry clash in Europe over human rights. This time Gore did build some bridges by persuading Li to join him in chairing a US-China forum on the environment, to examine ways of curbing industrial pollution. Gore's environment campaign on his trip to Asia was a bid to put his personal stamp on the mission - a worthy issue, but one which failed to ignite pub-

lic excitement and did little to dispel Gore's image as a somewhat wooden Vice President Bore.

US officials had to agree nothing had been achieved in changing China's attitudes to human rights - the best that could be said was that the talks between Gore and Li were less acrimonious than before. In other words, they didn't snarl but they didn't agree. Gore ended up in another semantic fumble over alleged Chinese attempts to funnel money into last year's American congressional and presidential elections. China vehemently denied the allegations and Gore said the issue would not prevent closer ties between the two countries. Since the matter is under FBI investigation, Gore's officials had to hastily reclearify that the rumors will not affect Sino-American relations - unless proved true, when they would become very serious indeed.

Gore did officiate at the signing of two large business contracts: a \$685 million Boeing deal to sell five 777-200 aircraft to Air China, and a General Motors joint venture with Shanghai's biggest automobile manufacturer. This reminded everyone that the bottom line is business, not human rights. China, however, still has a long way to go in learning that free markets and repressive politics cannot coexist for ever without one or the other cracking under the strain.



What a joke... on us

URI DAN DENNIS EISENBERG

For a century Jews in this land have relied on themselves for intelligence operations as Middle-Eastern Arab nations unleashed endless wars and violence against them.

So successful was this philosophy of self-reliance that the exploits of the Mossad, the General Security Service and military intelligence, working separately or in combined operations, were widely acclaimed.

Intelligence garnered in Arab capitals, on the West Bank, and in Gaza were a key to exploits like the liberation of Jewish hostages at Entebbe, the execution of the killers of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games, the capture of Adolf Eichmann in Buenos Aires, and the destruction of Iraq's nuclear bomb plant in Baghdad.

More recently, newspapers worldwide described how master bomb-maker Yihye Ayyash, known as "The Engineer," was himself blown up while using his mobile phone, a means of execution some might call poetic justice.

In these and other exploits, most still shrouded in secrecy, our intelligence services supplied that vital ingredient - accurate insider information - to ensure success.

This practice of "God helps those who help themselves" worked magnificently until 1994, when Israeli premier Yitzhak Rabin ordered his intelligence chiefs to end the reliance on the network of agents they had built up with great patience and effort in Gaza and the West Bank.

Rabin claimed publicly that Arafat, who didn't have the High Court to contend with, would succeed in preventing terror.

The field professionals in every branch of Israeli intelligence were aghast at this monumental blunder, which was to cost the country over 200 deaths from terror. "It's like blinding a man and cutting off his ears," said Rafi Eitan, terrorism adviser to prime ministers and consultant to Western government on the subject, "a lifetime of hard, careful work - gone. It's a policy designed to bring disaster upon the Jews of Israel."

Morale in security circles slumped badly. The mastermind of this unrealistic concept was Shimon Peres and his litter of lawyer mediators. They concocted the Oslo accords, which enshrined the principle that, henceforth, Yasser Arafat's nascent security services would supply all the information Israel needed to protect itself against terrorism.

Hamas and Islamic murderers would be forced to make a bonfire of their arms. Ayyash and others

where. If Netanyahu had taken the trouble to reread his pre-election speeches, he would have been reminded of his insistence that Arafat had a pact with Hamas and Islamic Jihad whereby suicide bombings would not be employed as long as the Israeli government gave him everything he wanted.

Arafat made his future intentions crystal-clear in giving the green light for an attack on Israeli soldiers when Netanyahu ordered the exit of the controversial Western Wall Tunnel opened without consulting him.

The shooting mobs were organized by Rajoub and Dahlan - just as they have been doing now with stones and firebombs in Hebron and Bethlehem.

The frustrated anger felt by our intelligence chiefs burst out after last Friday's attack. Said Moshe Ya'alon, military intelligence chief, with a soldier's bluntness: "Arafat gave the green light for suicide bombing attacks." He added that Rajoub had incited and directed the rioting in Hebron and other cities.

Israeli intelligence officers knew that former convicted terrorists, released prematurely from Israeli prisons to appease Arafat, organized and led the rioting. Palestinian police, sent in as a gesture so as to appear to be restoring order, were astonished to discover their own comrades in the front line, hurling rocks and urging on the local youth to acts of "heroism."

The Israeli defense minister and chief of staff, among those still suffering from the illusion that Arafat is a good chap, called on him to ensure that there would be no more terrorist attacks. They were probably still hoping that Palestinian security chiefs would act like gentlemen, and honor agreements.

But Arafat's double game was clear, proven by the release of some 120 fundamentalist prisoners days before the riots erupted. Among them was major Hamas figure Ibrahim Makadmeh, who promptly applauded the killing of Jewish women in Tel Aviv.

It was claimed in Gaza that Makadmeh had been rearrested, although Israeli security sources have no proof of this. In any event, Palestinian prisons are as porous as sponges. There is no doubt that Arafat has unleashed the hounds of terror - and he has no intention of reigning them in.

The writers are authors of The Mossad: Secrets of the Israel Secret Service and other books on the Middle East.

THE policy of relying on Jibril Rajoub, Arafat's security chief, and on Mohammed Dahlan, his counterintelligence commander for information, could not work. In fact, it was a major joke among the Palestinians.

This goes far in explaining why suicide bombers could strike where and when least expected. And still the naive belief persisted that Arafat's chiefs would warn us in advance about terrorist attacks.

In addition, the sudden elimination of a prime source of information from the West Bank reaching the GSS was demoralizing, affecting the Mossad, and military intelligence too.

Knowing all this, it seems beyond belief that, on becoming premier last year, Binyamin Netanyahu did not immediately order the intelligence community to revert to the "self-reliance" policies that had traditionally stood the nation in such good stead.

True, until last week's suicide attack in Tel Aviv, there were no suicide terrorist bombings for 10 months. But terrorists were murdering Israelis, on the roads and else-

For faith

NINA SHEA

Recently Dustin Hoffman, Goldie Hawn, Oliver Stone and 30 other Hollywood celebrities placed open letters in the European press slamming Germany's exclusion of Scientologists from government jobs and a boycott of Scientist Tom Cruise's movie Mission Impossible. They drew exaggerated parallels between the campaign against the Scientologists and the treatment of the Jews by Nazi Germany.

The impact was instant. The day the ads appeared, the State Department's Nicholas Burns announced: "We believe that the members of the Church of Scientology have a right to practice their religion... in... all... countries."

Unfortunately, Hollywood is selective in its campaigns for religious freedom. The most persecuted religious group in the world today, one that is suffering not just discrimination and bigotry but the real terror of torture, imprisonment and death, has been all but ignored by US policy- and opinion-makers and media.

That group is Christians. Christian minorities living in the remnant Communist countries and in societies where radical politicized Islamic movements hold sway are facing intensifying oppression purely for reasons of faith. Their plight makes Germany's restrictions on Scientology pale by comparison.

Consider: Sudan is waging jihad against its Christian and non-Muslim populations. Government troops "razed" Christian villages, massacring the men and selling the women and children into slavery. Independent human rights assessors say the campaign against the Christians in the Nuba mountain region has reached "genocidal proportions."

Saudi Arabia completely bans

The world's most persecuted religious group is being ignored

Christianity and all its vestiges; religious police raid private homes in search of secret worship services.

Egypt's Coptic community is vanishing under a violent onslaught by Moslem extremists. Tens of thousands of Coptic Christians were forced to flee or convert to Islam after large mobs of fanatical Moslem youths laid waste their villages in Upper Egypt in early 1996.

In China, as many as 60 million Christians refuse to join churches controlled by the atheist government, and daily risk their lives and liberty to worship in underground house-churches. Thousands of underground Christians, including two Catholic bishops, are in China's religious gulag. Chinese Catholics and Protestants say 1996 was their worst year since the Mao period.

Vietnam tortures and imprisons popular Protestant pastors for "disseminating religious propaganda," bars the Vatican from making key episcopal appointments, and sharply limits graduation from the Catholic seminary.

Iran, Pakistan, Algeria, Nigeria, North Korea, Cuba, Laos, Uzbekistan - the list of countries where Christians are under siege is long.

A YEAR ago prominent US Christian leaders launched a vigorous campaign to get their government to address this persecution.

The National Association of Evangelicals issued a "statement of conscience" declaring "dismay" that the US government has been indifferent to its obligation to speak out against the reigns of terror... against Christians." It called for the president to implement a list of concrete reforms to ensure concern for persecuted Christians in US foreign and immigration policy. Little has been done.

The Pope also has repeatedly condemned religious persecution of Christians, and in December the US Catholic bishops appealed to the secretary of state regarding atrocities committed against Christians by China. They never received a reply.

In September, both houses of Congress took up the cause in a bipartisan consensus by adopting resolutions "condemning the egregious human rights abuses and denials of religious liberty to Christians," and calling on the president's foreign policy to reflect this reality. These, too, have failed to attract attention.

(Los Angeles Times)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE RAMAT AVIV MALL

Sir, - In regard to the reaction of Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo and the "secular" lobby to the much-discussed Ramat Aviv mall, I would like to know if they have stopped to consider, or bothered to ask how the residents of Ramat Aviv/Neveh Avivim feel about the opening of this complex.

We managed to postpone the start of this huge complex, (which is situated in a pleasant, peaceful residential area) for two years, because we were concerned about our quality of life, not only on Shabbat, but all through the week, and particularly concerned about the increase of traffic along Tagore Street, which is the only access to our neighborhood. The fact that the mall will be closed on Shabbat means that we can look forward to some respite from the constant stream of traffic which threatens to engulf us.

Mr. Milo could tackle the growing traffic and parking problems which confront Tel Aviv citizens with the same fervor he is using to voice his disagreement with those who consider Shabbat important, he might yet earn himself a place in history!

RUTH STARK

Tel Aviv.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Sir, - "Haredim harass Jehovah's Witnesses" in big letters on the front page of The Jerusalem Post of March 13 is the most biased attitude ever expressed. In the two-column article by Haim Shapiro, there were three lines admitting that the "Witnesses" do missionary work, their "religious duty" - so why aren't they the "guilty" and not the haredim who object to it?

Haim, stick to reports on what you and your companion eat, and leave the haredim alone.

ANNA RUBIN

Jerusalem.

LEAVING A MARK

Sir, - Recently I visited the tombs of the great leaders of the nation at Mount Herzl and I have noticed that on their gravestones, there is no information whatsoever about their legendary service to the State of Israel. It appears to me that this landmark is a historical sight which is to serve and keep informed future generations to come.

On the way back to my car, I noticed that many trees have a plaque next to them with much more information than the tombs. I think this should be corrected.

NEHEMIA HASAK

Highland Park, Illinois.

GREEN LIGHT?

Sir, - In the Post of March 23, ("US to Arafat: Say no to terrorism") regarding differing intelligence viewpoints between the US and Israel as to whether or not Arafat had in effect given a "green light" to terror, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns is quoted as saying that the US is "not going to debate intelligence assessments publicly."

The different assessments of Arafat as a trustworthy partner for peace who has eschewed violence versus a calculating opportunist who lets loose the hounds when he's unhappy, should not be a matter of secrecy. If the US has reasons to believe in Arafat, it should spell them out. As an American citizen whose life is on the line over exactly this issue, I demand to hear them. If the US does not have reasons, or if its reasons are wrong, then their support for Arafat over the Har Homa issue, and its failure to warn him against making inflammatory statements, was in fact the first "green light."

REUVEN WACHTFOGEL

Jerusalem.

PICTURE POSTSCRIPT



Even a dinosaur needs a little back-scratch now and then. The full-size replica of a 70-million-year-old Albertosaurus is getting a cleaning as it prepares to leave Canada for a dinosaur exhibition in Australia. (Reuters)

هكذا من الأهل

Civic watchdogs that bite

They brought the attorney-general to court this week. They are demanding the prosecution of a host of MKs. Who are the country's civic watchdogs?
Larry Derfner reports

When on Tuesday the High Court of Justice gave Attorney-General Elyakim Rubinstein 10 days to announce whether he is prepared to undergo a polygraph test — or suspend all such testing in the civil service — it was another victory for the Movement for Quality Government. The organization which petitioned the court over the issue, is one of two civic watchdogs — the other is Amitai — that have gained increasing clout and notoriety in recent years.

retired intelligence and police officers, is currently preoccupied with convincing the High Court of Justice to order Olmert's suspension as mayor until his trial is over; trying to speed up the start of Deni's trial for illegally transferring public funds to Shas institutions (his current trial is for allegedly taking bribes); and is mounting a public campaign against a general amnesty to mark Israel's 50th year in 1998.

For Quality Government's petition in the Deri case, that led the High Court of Justice in 1993 to bar accused felons from serving as ministers or deputy ministers. But the ability of public watchdog organizations to fight in the High Court of Justice is relatively new.



Illustration by M. K. K...

BOTH ORGANIZATIONS were set up in 1990, but were spurred into action by two different irritants. For the Movement for Quality Government, it was the demonstration in the "stinking maneuver" that a tiny political party had the power to determine who ran the government — something that mobilized public outrage and in turn led to passage of the law for the direct election of the prime minister.

Segal said Amilai, the Movement for Quality Government have done well as a "catalyst" in the justice system — pursuing many cases that state prosecutors have delayed or neglected. "Somebody has to go to court on these matters, somebody has to take the trouble," he said.

Hebrew University law students get credit for staffing the Movement for Quality Government's hot line. The organization engages in widespread educational activities, and has even established a "Quality Government Day" (May 15) with an awards ceremony. It has a squeaky-clean air about it, in contrast to Amilai's earlier, get-the-bad-guys attitude. The Movement for Quality Government is also larger and better-funded.

The two organizations do not work together. Their offices don't even have each other's telephone numbers. Asked if there was any competition involved, Partem replied: "Frankly I don't know that much about Amilai. But our general attitude is that we welcome other people who want to improve government."

"Somebody has to go to court on these matters, somebody has to take the trouble."

To tell or not to tell: Sister's husband is gay

By RUTHIE BLUM
Dear Ruthie,
My sister announced to the family that she's getting divorced. Because this is her second marriage, my parents are enraged, and think she's being her usual egocentric self (i.e. irresponsible towards the children, etc.). But my sister's husband is gay — a fact she discovered by accident, though she claims they haven't had sexual relations in over a year.

Apparently, your sister realizes this very well — else she, too, would be interested in telling them about her reasons for getting divorced. Where dealing with your frustration is concerned, you might do well to follow your sister's example: exercise restraint while taking parental criticism for granted.

You may never be able to make your mother suddenly approve of the long hours you spend in front of the computer (though if doing so ends up becoming something related to your eventual career, she might respect it retroactively). What you can do, however, is examine your behavior vis-a-vis your family during the time when you are away from the Internet. Perhaps you exhibit certain forms of anti-social behavior which cause your mother to blame your addiction. Ask yourself whether you are generally cheerful around her, or tend to be surly and unresponsive. When you mow the lawn and take out the garbage, for example, do you make it clear that it is torture, or do you accept it as an integral part of being a member of a family?

Amateur 'lawyer' proves hedges are forever

By AUDREY WOODS
Colin Seymour may seem the classic English eccentric, a self-taught lawyer going to court to invoke a long-forgotten law to defend a hedge. But he won, and may have set an important precedent that will help save the rolling patchwork of the ancient English countryside from the bulldozers of modern development.

Fired by a passion for the rights of the public, the 63-year-old former teacher has prevailed in a string of court cases against farmers, government bodies and others who want to close paths, tear up trees or gouge out mines. "Petitions and reasoned letters are a waste of time," he said. "If you can write a half-page letter threatening the law, it sharpens their minds. You do not have to be a solicitor or a barrister in order to be able to read and reason and put together a legal argument."

The victory brought him widespread acclaim. Hedgerows have rimmed English fields since Saxon times, and some are a thousand years old. In the 18th century, when much commonly held land was "enclosed," or divided into individual parcels, hedgerows marked out boundaries.

His edge is sheer determination. He spends hours wading through old documents until he finds what he needs to win. Several of his cases have involved encroachments on historic paths and other public rights of way. In 1987, for instance, he successfully took up the case of two men who had been trying since 1949 to get a public pathway re-opened.

ETHIOPIAN

Continued from Page 1
MK Adisu Massala (Labor) said that he had received numerous complaints from Ethiopian immigrants serving in the IDF about racist remarks and mistreatment. "The IDF has not learned how to deal with phenomenon of the suicides of Ethiopian soldiers. The army must immediately draw the necessary conclusions, and reduce this phenomenon to the minimum," Massala said.

Besides banning the use of derogatory language about Ethiopians, Mula also suggested "training commanders to treat people like people, regardless of their race or color." He also suggested teaching all soldiers more about the behavioral codes in the Ethiopian community, and wondered why Belay's family had not received the results of the army's investigation of his death.

As an example of the last, Regonis recalled an incident last year in which an Ethiopian man, during his reserve service, murdered his wife and then killed himself. Regonis pointed out, however, that the army carefully investigates each incident. He would not relate to Tameene's suicide, saying that not all the details are known.

ROSS

Continued from Page 1
will the US decide on its steps on how to contribute to the process, and on the timing of Albright's visit to Israel, the official said. He is expected to return to the US by the weekend.

alone, stating that even if Netanyahu were to take certain steps, they should not be interpreted by Arafat as a reward for clamping down on terrorism, but as the logical next steps in the process. "What is critical is a commitment by Arafat, and demonstrations in actions and in words, that he is moving on terrorism," he said. "It is critical there be an absolute and unequivocal message that terror and violence are unacceptable."

After a week of working the phones, including a call Tuesday night from Albright to Arafat, Ross is being sent because the US "feels it's important to reinforce this message in as direct a fashion" as possible, the official said.

#1 BESTSELLER
LEONARD MALTIN
1997 MOVIE & VIDEO GUIDE
The 1997 edition brings you up to date on the good, the bad and the awful... from all time greats to unforgettable duds. More than 19,000 A-Z rated entries, 300 new films, complete with summary, director, stars and a lot more. A must for every video library and for cable movie selections. Softcover, 1582 pp. Signet JP Price NIS 39, incl. VAT + NIS 3 mailing in Israel.

Dear Ruthie-Keeping Sis, The problem you are having here is one of frustration with your parents. As such, it is unlikely that even the truth about your sister

ISRAELI SHARES IN NEW YORK

Table with columns: LAST, CHANGE, LAST, CHANGE, LAST, CHANGE. Lists various Israeli companies and their share prices.

MISHTANIM LEADING 100 TASE ISSUES

Table with columns: LAST, CHANGE, LAST, CHANGE, LAST, CHANGE. Lists the top 100 Israeli stocks on the TASE.

INTERNATIONAL SHARES

Large table with columns: LAST, CHANGE, LAST, CHANGE, LAST, CHANGE. Lists international stocks from various countries.

Table with columns: LAST, CHANGE, LAST, CHANGE, LAST, CHANGE. Lists various international stocks.

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TASE ROUNDUP

Investors scared off by political tension. Mishtanim 242.74 ▼ 0.49%. Maof 250.84 ▼ 0.65%.

By JESSICA STEINBERG and ROBERT DANIEL

Stocks fell yesterday amid investor concern at continuing tensions with the Palestinians about the building of Har Homa.

Leading shares down were Koor Industries Ltd., Tadiran Ltd. and Clal Electronics Industries Ltd.

Offsetting them were rises in Bezeq, Ormat Industries Ltd. and Elite Industries Ltd.

The recent headlines describing Palestinian rioting in the West Bank and a terrorist bombing in Tel Aviv are deterring investors from investing heavily in the market, said Eli Nahum, co-managing director of Zannex Securities in Ramat Gan. "I wouldn't expect the market to get back to value until

the sky clears in terms of the political situation. People who believe that you can buy cheaply in Israel are waiting for the political issues to be clarified, and that prevents the market from going up."

The Mishtanim Index of 100 issues fell 0.49 percent to 242.74 and the Maof index of 25 top stocks slipped 0.65% to 250.84.

Across the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, NIS 70.4 million of shares traded. That's 26% below the month's daily average of NIS 94.8m, and 51% less than the year's average of NIS 143m. Five shares fell for every four that rose.

(Bloomberg)

Key Representative Rates

Table with columns: US Dollar, Sterling, Mark. Shows exchange rates for NIS.

NEW YORK MARKET INDEXES

Table with columns: DJ Industrials, DJ Transport, DJ Utility, DJ Composite, NYSE Comp, S&P 500 Index. Shows market index values.

NYSE STOCKS

Table with columns: Unchanged, Advances, Declines, Volume. Shows NYSE stock market activity.

OTHER MARKET INDEXES

Table with columns: FTSE 100, Nikkei 225, Hang Seng, HSI. Shows international market indices.

DOLLAR CROSSRATES (US)

Table with columns: Pound, Swiss Franc, Japanese Yen, etc. Shows dollar crossrates.

US COMMODITIES

Table with columns: Cocoa, Coffee, Cotton, etc. Shows US commodity prices.

LONDON COMMODITIES

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SPOT MARKET METALS (US)

Table with columns: Gold, Silver, Platinum, etc. Shows spot market metal prices.

NEW YORK METAL FUTURES

Table with columns: Gold, Silver, Platinum, etc. Shows New York metal futures prices.

LONDON METAL FIXES

Table with columns: Gold, Silver, Platinum, etc. Shows London metal fix prices.

DATA COMMUNICATIONS VIA

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

PARIS

Table with columns: Alcatel, Bouygues, etc. Shows Paris market data.

FRANKFURT

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Vertical advertisement on the left side of the page, including 'Share Deposits', 'Computer will make gov't more accessible', and 'KEY MARKET'.

Vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, including 'MUSEUM', 'JERUSALEM', 'HAIFA', 'EMERGENCY PHARMACIES', 'FIRE', 'MEDICAL HELP', 'DUTY HOSPITALS', 'POLICE'.

CRITIC'S CHOICE

THEATER

HELEN KAYE

Actor Bob Kingdom is back to present another round of his acclaimed one-man show, Dylan Thomas Return Journey...

CLASSICAL MUSIC

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

Maxim Shostakovich conducts the works of his father, Dmitri, in the current program of subscription concerts...

WORLD MUSIC

MICHAEL AJZENSTADT

Indian musician Shankar brings his own brand of world music to concerts at the Tel Aviv Performing Arts Center...

JAZZ

HELEN KAYE

Eclectic jazz clarinetist Harold Rubin puts his own texts to music and videos in collaboration...



Michael Zoratz joins Amos Lavie in the Family Channel's 'The Meter is Running.'

with singer Jenny Tamir, and a quartet on drums, guitar, trombone and bass.

POP

HELEN KAYE

Welsh heartthrob singer Tom Jones will be making local hearts go pitty-pat with a medley of old favorites and new numbers...

TELEVISION

ELANA CHIPMAN

The Meter Is Running (Family Channel 10:05) follows the adventures of a Tel Aviv taxi driver, played by Amos Lavie...

TV

CHANNEL 1

6:30 News flash 6:31 News in Arabic 6:45 Exercise Time 7:00 Good Morning Israel

EDUCATIONAL TV

8:00 Family Ties 8:15 Medicine 8:30 Demythical 9:00 Arithmetic 9:25 Reading 9:45 Programs for the very young

MIDDLE EAST TV

8:00 TV Shop 10:30 The 700 Club 16:00 Gospel Bill 16:30 Correspond 17:30 ART 18:00 In the Heat of the Night

CHANNEL 2

6:15 Today's Programs 6:30 Sharkey and George (ppt) 7:00 Breakfast Magazine

FAMILY CHANNEL (3)

7:00 Good Evening with Guy Pine (ppt) 7:30 Love Story with Yossi Sivas (ppt)

JORDAN TV

15:00 Holy Koran

MOVIE CHANNEL (4)

11:30 Biddances S'En Vont En Guerre (French, 1971) - the French comic Charlot's group go AWOL.

CHANNEL 5

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 8

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 10

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 11

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 12

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 13

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 14

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 15

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 16

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 17

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 18

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 19

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 20

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 21

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 22

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 23

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 24

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 25

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 26

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 27

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

CHANNEL 28

6:00 Open University - The House, the White Form, Strzel Anzalts; Nerves; Earth Revealed

PRIME TIME TV

Table with 8 columns (1-8) and 8 rows (19:30-23:00) listing TV programs like News flash, Whaddya say, News, Zehu Zeh, Charley Varick, etc.

British artist and his wife, with Isabelle Adjani, Alan Bates and Maggie Smith. Directed by James Ivory, (96 mins.)

11:30 Showbiz Today 12:30 CNN Newsmag 13:30 World Report 14:30 American Edition

15:00 Sports 16:00 NCAA Basketball 17:30 Waterports 18:00 NCAA Basketball

19:00 Movies 20:00 Movies 21:00 Movies 22:00 Movies 23:00 Movies

Phone reservations: Tel Aviv 5222244. All times are p.m. unless otherwise indicated.



CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

ACROSS: 1 Gains honours (11), 9 A person looking round finds these girls left out, 10 7 some are given on certain occasions (5), 11 There's many a ship-wreck caused by accident (6), 12 Jockey talk that's attractive only to the young (8), 13 The mother bird will get wet (6), 15 Party conservatives straightened out (3,5), 18 Exceptionally neatly or fussily? (3), 19 Good fellows left on board (6), 21 An example of the fashionable stand (8), 23 Have a hankering for a penthouse? (4-2), 26 A figure initially thought perfect (5), 27 Plainly embarrassed by a planter—quite a dog! (3,6), 28 Having to tend mares possibly for show (1,1)

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers and some filled-in letters.

QUICK CROSSWORD: ACROSS: 7 Male address (6), 8 Maker or deviser (6), 10 Promote (7), 11 Manservant (5), 12 Cicatrice (4), 13 Predilection (5), 17 Bizarre (5), 18 Unaccompanied song (4), 22 Film award (5), 23 Accede (7), 24 Refused to obey (6), 25 Niche in wall (6), DOWN: 1 Boundless (7), 2 African spear (7), 3 Commenced (5), 4 Consciousness of expression (7), 5 Nimble (5), 8 Condition (5), 9 Degeneration (9), 14 Group of four (7), 15 Liberty (7), 16 Contended (7), 19 Disorderly (5), 20 Mock (5), 21 Funeral bell (5)

SOLUTIONS section containing detailed answers for the cryptic crossword, including words like 'The Ghost and the Darkness', 'The Nutty Professor', 'The House of the Living Dead', etc.

Earthquakes rock Israel, Lebanon

By DAVID RUDGE and news agencies

Two earthquakes rocked the northern and central parts of the country yesterday, as well as parts of Lebanon and Syria.

There were no casualties in Israel and no serious damage was reported, although the tremors were felt from the northern border to south of Tel Aviv and as far inland as Jerusalem.

There were some reports of damage in Lebanon, where the two quakes were felt much more violently.

The first tremor shook the region shortly before 7:30 a.m. and prompted a flood of calls to police and emergency services, as well as the offices of the Seismological Division of the National Infrastructure

Ministry's Geophysical Institute.

Residents from Nahariya to the Galilee Panhandle reported the quake had shaken buildings and rattled furniture.

"My bed shook, the TV in front of the bed shook. At first, I didn't know what it was and then I realized it was an earthquake - that's when I really woke up," Shlomi Cohen, of Petah Tikva, told Army Radio.

A UN officer serving in Lebanon said: "Buildings were shaken in Tyre and especially in Beirut, where there were reports of property damage. Lamps were swinging and objects fell from tables and bookshelves. It was quite strong."

Debris which fell from some buildings damaged cars parked on the streets of Beirut, a city of 1.2 million

people. About 50 structures sustained minor damage in the suburbs of the Lebanese capital, police said.

Parents in their pajamas grabbed their children and rushed from apartment buildings into the streets. Some families in Beirut spent the morning in their cars for fear of going back to their homes. Others headed east to mountain regions away from coastal areas in anticipation of aftershocks.

"I was awakened by the shaking of my bed and the noise of breaking glass," said 45-year-old housewife Majida Hajj in a southern Beirut suburb.

Carmen Barake, another housewife at Mansourieh, a hilltop suburb east of Beirut, said: "The building danced and swayed with us." She said objects in her fifth-floor apartment were tossed off shelves and tables

"like ping pong balls."

Dr. Rami Hofstetter, of the Seismological Division, said the first quake was centered off the coast of Tripoli, and measured 5.6 on the Richter scale.

"It was a moderate earthquake, not a major one, which happens from time to time in this region, so it was not a big surprise."

The second tremor, a strong aftershock, occurred around 4:30 p.m. It was centered closer to Beirut and measured 5 on the Richter scale. It lasted for several minutes and was also felt as far south as the center of the country, again without causing injury or damage.

Hofstetter noted that Israel is part of an area that is susceptible to earthquakes, being near the Syria-Africa rift.

WEATHER

Forecast: Rise in temperatures.



Labor Party leader Shimon Peres waves as he leaves Bangkok's Government House yesterday. Peres told an economic conference that Jewish settlements in the territories are an obstacle to the peace process.

PM to ministers: Your jobs are safe

By SARAH HONG and news agencies

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu had to soothe a number of ministers' anxieties yesterday, in an effort to refute a press report that they are about to lose their portfolios in order to facilitate Labor's entry into the coalition.

But a meeting with Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai had to be postponed and will probably only take place tomorrow, due to the crowded schedules of both Netanyahu and Mordechai, who is reported to have taken the greatest umbrage by the suggestion he may lose his job.

According to a report in *Yediot Aharanot* Tuesday, Netanyahu and Labor Party leader Shimon Peres already have agreed that Mordechai's portfolio would go to Labor's Ehud Barak.

Both Netanyahu and Peres have categorically denied agreeing to the establishment of a national unity government and that they already had mapped out the portfolio redistribution.

However, Peres expressed readiness yesterday to form a new government if the current coalition falls over its failure to revive the peace process with the Palestinians.

"If there is to be a new coalition with new guiding lights, I would do my best to support it and perhaps be a part of it," Peres said in a speech at a forum of 120 global business executives in Bangkok.

Peres and Netanyahu's denials did not entirely still the political rumor mill, a fact which forced Netanyahu to make the rounds of the ministers mentioned as likely to lose their posts.

Netanyahu yesterday strove to allay the anxieties of Finance Minister Dan Meridor, Health Minister Yehoshua Matza, Communications Minister Limor Livnat and Justice Minister Tzahi Hanegbi.

The finance portfolio reportedly is to go to Peres.

Meridor said, "If a national unity government were a viable option, then my portfolio would not be the obstacle which would prevent its formation."

Livnat said, "The chances that such a broad coalition with Labor would ever become a reality are quite low. Rather than speculate about portfolios, the questions which should be asked are what the basis for creating such a government is, especially if we can reach common ground on policy guidelines."

Matza said Netanyahu had told him in their meeting that the talk about "the national unity government being in the works is gibberish. No such decision had been taken and he said I can continue in my office without any worry."

AROUND THE WORLD

	LOW	HIGH	COND.	WIND
Amsterdam	05	13	55	clear
Berlin	05	16	81	clear
Buenos Aires	05	25	77	clear
Chicago	05	25	77	clear
Copenhagen	05	17	83	clear
Frankfurt	05	17	83	clear
Geneva	05	17	83	clear
Helsinki	05	17	83	clear
Hong Kong	20	28	75	clear
London	05	17	83	clear
Los Angeles	05	21	70	clear
Madrid	05	21	70	clear
Moscow	05	17	83	clear
New York	05	17	83	clear
Paris	05	17	83	clear
Rome	05	17	83	clear
Stockholm	05	17	83	clear
Sydney	18	25	77	cloudy
Tokyo	05	17	83	clear
Turkey	05	17	83	clear
Varna	05	17	83	clear
Zurich	05	17	83	clear

Plan for non-Orthodox religious councils defeated

By LIAT COLLINS

A bill proposing the establishment of separate religious councils to serve the non-Orthodox was defeated yesterday in a preliminary reading by a vote of 34 to 12.

The bill, submitted by MK Avi Yehezkel (Labor) was intended to complement another bill of his that passed a preliminary reading two

months ago, which would allow only Orthodox Jews to sit on the current religious councils.

The idea behind the two bills was to allow Jewish residents to choose which council best suits their religious needs. "The Orthodox and the Reform do not agree with one another and there is no point in trying to force the Orthodox to come to terms with the Reform stream [on the same council]," Yehezkel said.

He said the bills were an attempt to preserve the principles of equality and religious freedom, while not harming anybody's rights.

When his earlier bill passed preliminary reading, Yehezkel suffered a barrage of criticism from his party colleagues. "But not one of them proposed a real solution to the problems of the different streams of Judaism," Yehezkel said.

Netanyahu scolds MKs on vote failures

By LIAT COLLINS

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu called representatives of the coalition into his Knesset office yesterday to scold them after they lost a series of plenum votes on the preliminary reading of bills to the government opposes.

Coalition chairman Michael Eitan, who usually acts as the whip in charge of mustering MKs to vote, was absent.

MK Ruby Rivlin (Likud) took exception to the parliamentary equivalent of being called into the

principal's office, saying: "It's like a rabbi shouting at his community: 'Why is there never a minyan here?' And they tell him: 'Why are you shouting at us? Shout at the ones who aren't here.'"

Among the bills which passed preliminary reading despite lack of government support were:

- An amendment to the security forces bill, which would allow a soldier demobilized because of poor health to continue to receive free medical treatment. The bill, presented by MK Ori Orr (Labor), was passed by 31 votes.

A bill proposed by MK Anat Maor (Meretz) and MK Tamar Gozansky (Labor) which would give national insurance benefits for women unable to work during pregnancy passed by 31 votes.

A bill increasing pensions for employees who have worked at least 10 years in the public sector and are above the age of 40.

An amendment to the Bezek Law on billing phone calls according to the exact length of time, proposed by Silvan Shalom (Likud), which passed by 21 votes. Communications Minister Limor

Livnat and Agriculture and Environment Minister Rafael Eitan voted against.

A coalition bill concerning the rights of terminally ill Chernobyl victims, proposed by coalition MKs Michael Nudelman and Yuli Stern (both Yisrael Ba'Aliya), was defeated, but the same bill presented by two Labor MKs - Sofia Landver and Yossi Katz - passed.

Labor faction chairman Ra'anana Cohen, clearly pleased with events in the plenum said: "With a coalition like this, who needs an opposition?"

Labor, Meretz file no-confidence motions over security situation

By LIAT COLLINS

Both Labor and Meretz have filed motions of no-confidence in the prime minister over the security situation following last week's Tel Aviv cafe bombing. The motions are expected to come up in the plenum on Monday.

Meretz faction chairman Haim Oron explained the motion saying: "The government of a country whose citizens are scared to go out and can't sit in cafes has no right to exist."

Labor faction chairman Ra'anana Cohen stressed the deterioration in relations between the government and the Palestinian Authority, which he said have reached "crisis point" because of the government's malfunctioning.

He said the prime minister is causing the international isolation of Israel while strengthening PA Chairman Yasser Arafat in the eyes of the world.

The Tel Aviv bombing was discussed in the Knesset plenum yesterday. No minister was present to respond to the 10 motions to the

agenda on the subject. Moleket leader Rehavam Ze'evi made a motion calling for Tzurif, the suicide bomber's village, to be destroyed in response to the fatal attack in Tel Aviv.

He also called on the government to end the cooperation with the Palestinian security forces and for an "all-out war on terror" and the intifada. He said Rachel's Tomb should be annexed to Jerusalem to ensure the safety of the Jews who visit it.

MK Ori Orr (Labor) attacked the prime minister for what he said was revealing intelligence information for political purposes in open meetings with the press. He called for greater cooperation between Israeli and Palestinian security forces to prevent terror attacks.

MK Moshe Gafni (United Torah Judaism) has complained of Shabbat desecration by the Tel Aviv Municipality in the renovations works to the bombed cafe. The renovations could have waited another day, he said.

AACT & THE JERUSALEM POST

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LAST CALL FOR HANDICRAFTERS

The Jerusalem Post Pessah Handicrafts Fair will take place on Wednesday, April 23, 1997, at the Ra'anana Sports Center, next to Metro West High School.

If you create top quality handicrafts and wish to book a stand at the fair, please contact Bevertee Black, Director of The Jerusalem Post Funds, Tel. 02-557-6528.

All proceeds from the fair will help Israel's needy children, the elderly and new immigrants.

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